Now the SAIL is manufacturing different types of tubes. All the orders which have been given now, have luckily gone to the Indian manufacturers only and the the comparision of the price which the hon. Member has done-probably, he has taken the figure from Chinese. When the Chinese pipes woule be brought here, we have to add our import duty and other transport charges added, we have seen that, practically, the rate is at par. So, there is no high rate at which this is purchased.

Utilisation of Godavari Water

*302. SHRI RUMANDLA RAAMACHANDRAYYA: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government of Andhra Pradesh has entered into an agreement with the Austrian Government for utilisation of Godavari water in hydel and irrigation projects;

(b) whether water going waste and flowing into Bay of Bengal will be utilised with the implementation of this agreement; and

(c) by when the work on the proposed projects is likely to be commenced?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI ARJUN CHARAN SETHI): (a) to (c) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) Reportedly the Government of Andhra Pradesh has signed Memorandum of Undersanding (MoU) with the Government of Austria for exploring the possibility of widening cooperation in the development of Irrigation, Hydroelectric power, Health and Infrastructure related projects like urban transport in the State of Andhra Pradesh. An Implementation Agreement has also been signed between the Government of Andhra Pradesh and the Austrian Embassy.

(b) As per the available information, Godavari Lift Irrigation Scheme at Devadula on the River Godavari which is mentioned in the MoU is planned to utilise 38.2 thousand million cubic feet of water. Pulichintala Project on River Krishna has been planned to work as a balancing reservoir.

(c) The proposal in respect of Godavari Lift Irrigation Scheme and Pulichintala Project from the Government of Andhra Pradesh for

consideration of external funding has not been received either by the Ministry of Water Resources or the Department of Economic Affairs, Government of India. In terms of the latest policy of Government of India, no Official Development Assistance (ODA) is to be received from Austria for any new projects at Government level.

श्री रूमान्डला रामचन्द्रय्या: सभापति महोदय, आन्ध्र प्रदेश सरकार ने गोदावरी के जल को बचाने के लिए ऑस्ट्रिया से समझौता और वार्तालाप किया है। इसमें भारत सरकार का क्या योगदान है और यह कब प्रारम्भ होगा?

SHRI ARJUN CHARAN SETHI: Sir, the Government of Andhra Pradesh has signed a memorandum with the Austrian Government is a news for us; we are not at all aware of the fact which the hon. Member has mentioned.

श्री रूमान्डला रामचन्द्रय्या: सभापति महोदय, गोदावरी से जो पानी अधिक होकर समुद्र में मिल जा रहा है उसको रोकने के लिए भारत सरकार क्या प्लान कर रही है?

SHRI ARJUN CHARAN SETHI: Sir, on the utilisation of waters of river Godavari, we are having the interlinking of rivers project. We are thinking of interlinking various rivers in the country. When the Task Force submits its report, certainly, every detail would be known to the House as well as to the Government.

SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Sir, there is surplus Godavari water in my State. Per year, more than 1500 TMC water is flowing into the sea without being utilized. The farmlands are at a higher altitude, while the river is at a lower altitude. Unless we lift the level of water to the tune of say, 150-200 metres, it would not be possible to utilize the water. So, in this context, whether the Government of India would come forward to take up the Polavaram Project, which contemplates to utilize more water from Godavari, as a national project and come to the rescue of the State to construct that project by financing.

SHRI ARJUN CHARAN SETHI: Sir, the hon. Member has asked about the Polavaram Project; Unfortunately, the basin States are not agreeing to implement this project. So, unless the basin States agree to it and come to a conslusion and come to the Government of India for implementing this project, I cannot assure the hon. Members that it will be done.

SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Sir, it is within the framework of...(*Interruptions*) It is within the framework of....(*Interruptions*) Sir it is a very important question. (*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN: All the questions are important. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Sir, irrigation is considered to be the lifeline of any State. It is a very important question. (*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please take your seat. (*Interruptions*) Please take your seat. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Sir, I want to emphasise that....(*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, there is no need to emphasise it at this moment. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Sir, it contemplates the utilization of water, which is ..... (*Interruptions*).

MR. CHAIRMAN: Everybody knows about it. (*Interruptions*)

SHRIMATI PREMA CARIAPPA: Sir, I would like to know from the hon. Minister as to what steps the Government propose to take to ensure better utilization of river water, particularly of Southern parts of the country, in view of the fact that a large part of this area has been suffering from a severe drought for the last 2-3 years.

SHRI ARJUN CHARAN SETHI: Sorry, Sir, I could not hear the question.

श्री सभापति: महिला बोल रही हैं इसलिए आप दुबारा सुनना चाहते हैं?

SHRIMATI PREMA CARIAPPA: Okay, Sir, I will repeat. I would like to know from the hon. Minister as to what steps the Government propose to take to ensure better utilization of river water, particularly of Southern parts of the country, in view of the fact that a large part of this area has been suffering from a severe drought for the last 2-3 years.

SHRI ARJUN CHARAN SETHI: Sir, as I have already stated, the only course which is left before the Government is, unless the surplus water in the North India is transferred to the Southern India, the problem of drought cannot be solved. That is why a project pertaining to interlinking of rivers is being contemplated. That is being studied by the Task Force, appointed by the Government.